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Chairman: Mr. Wolfe ..... (Jamaica)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 106: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/62/84, A/62/126, A/62/127, A/C.3/62/L.2 and L.3)

Agenda item 107: International drug control (*continued*) (A/62/117)

1. **Mr. Giade** (Nigeria) said that despite consistent efforts to combat transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, the situation continued to threaten international security. The impact of drug abuse and trading on youth, the spread of HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening diseases, quality of life and poverty was most alarming. In addition to current efforts to curb drug trafficking, technical assistance from the international community and bodies such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was urgently needed to enhance the capacity of Member States, particularly in the areas of training and job creation.

2. The strengthening of international and regional coordination was crucial, notably in the West African subregion, which had become a hotspot for global drug trafficking. Affirming Nigeria's commitment to the global drug control system under the guidance and coordination of UNODC and his Government's confidence in international legislation on drug control, he called on United Nations Member States to fully implement those instruments.

3. The work of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), in cooperation with the international community, had empowered Nigeria to tackle the issue of international crime prevention and drug control, with a measure of success in narcotics control, drug reduction and anti-money-laundering mechanisms. However, Nigeria urgently needed international support and technical assistance, and he appealed to international partners to give further support to Government agencies in their attempt to stamp out drug trafficking, particularly of cannabis, in the West African subregion.

4. Vast resources had been spent on curbing the transit and export of drugs, and having applied itself diligently to fulfilling its international treaty obligations, Nigeria hoped that its partners would supplement those efforts by providing technical assistance, logistics support and training. He also wished to underscore the risk that the region might attract other illicit drugs, such as cocaine, if the drug war was not tackled head-on. It was crucial for the international community to address and pre-empt that threat.

5. Assistance to the West African Joint Operations (WAJO), established as a subregional cooperation entity, had waned in the previous two years. WAJO needed urgent support for training, logistics, funding and other forms of technical assistance. It was hoped that the international community would help Nigeria to meet that challenge and thereby forestall a major drug trafficking epidemic in the subregion.

6. He took the opportunity to renew Nigeria's full support and commitment to reaching the targets set at the twentieth special session of the United Nations General Assembly. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime needed sustainable and predictable funding in order to combat effectively the international drug menace. African countries had been deeply affected by reduced donor funding for drug control, a situation that had served as an incentive for drug traffickers. African countries, in particular those of West Africa, urgently needed financial assistance to build capacity in the areas of criminal justice, crime prevention and drug trafficking in order to ensure their long-term socio-economic development.

7. **Mr. Onischenko** (Ukraine) expressed concern about the threats to international stability posed by organized crime, human and drug trafficking and the various associated phenomena. Globalization had created an environment in which illicit drugs, crime and terrorism flowed easily across borders, hence the need for vigilance and the continued improvement of national, regional and international mechanisms for effective cooperation.

8. Ukraine believed that the main priorities set for the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and UNODC, the steps based on the progress review of the twentieth special session's target implementation, and the adoption of the UNODC medium-term strategy could meaningfully help countries face the challenges posed by the drug trade. Ukraine supported efforts to enhance international cooperation in combating transnational organized crime, and intended to remain an active participant in that regard.

9. The success of the first session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention

against Corruption would allow States to further develop a unified global approach and a coherent implementation strategy in tackling corruption. Expressing Ukraine's full support for the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and the forum on the Global Initiative to be held in Vienna, he stressed the importance of existing legislation on crime, drugs and human trafficking, and urged States to comply with, and fully implement, the provisions of those instruments and the UNODC strategies and policies. Ukraine would continue to honour its obligations under the multilateral treaty regimes, and in that context, he called on international organizations to provide the necessary technical assistance to ensure their effective implementation.

10. In attempting to promote stable international and regional cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice, international organizations should adopt additional measures that enhanced the exchange of information and lessons learned, and should provide further technical and expert assistance to help Member States strengthen their justice and crime prevention mechanisms. States should be encouraged to broaden practical contact among themselves, by regularly sharing their experiences in the production and use of specialized technology and equipment to counter organized crime. Success in that area depended on both the efficiency and professionalism of the law enforcement bodies of each State, the level of their international cooperation and on finding practical ways to eliminate the root causes of the phenomenon.

11. With regard to international drug control, he said Ukraine endorsed an integrated and comprehensive approach to tackling the illicit manufacture of drugs and drug trading, in order to prevent the diversion of substances used in the licit manufacture of pharmaceuticals, and highlighted the need for effective control and verification systems. Recognizing that illicit drug production and consumption were the result of low levels of social and economic development in many regions, he proposed that drug and crime prevention measures should be integrated into sustainable development strategies.

12. Since the prevention of drug abuse was a precondition to establishing a healthy and efficient society, Ukraine welcomed the measures taken by UNODC and its subsidiary bodies, in particular their assistance in resolving urgent drug-related issues. The increasing level of heroin production in Afghanistan was especially worrying to Ukraine, as countries in the region had become transit States for large volumes of heroin destined for Europe. The situation clearly illustrated the particular vulnerability of countries with economies in transition because of their geographic location. In that context, he welcomed the decision taken by five Central Asian countries, the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan, to establish a regional coordination centre to combat illicit drug trafficking and organized crime.

13. **Mr. Anzola Quinto** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that action to combat the global drug problem, in all its manifestations, was an area of priority for the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as a socialist State, both in terms of national security and from the human welfare perspective. Furthermore, Venezuela was committed to meeting the targeted objectives established under the Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. Persistent efforts made by Venezuela, through its preventive and enforcement strategies and actions, had not only attracted the attention of such recognized bodies as the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), but had also borne tangible results. The volume of drug seizures, amounting to over 60 tons during the previous year, and significant arrests in recent months reflected the Government's firm commitment.

14. Venezuela endeavoured to improve its body of legislation in order to more effectively confront the drug problem, through reforms aimed at strengthening information systems and increasing penalties against traffickers. In addition, innovative draft laws on aircraft, the customs services, seized assets and the postal system were under consideration.

15. Although Venezuela was neither a producer nor a large-scale consumer of drugs, it had nevertheless become a major transit State for drugs destined for countries where they were in high demand. The Government firmly believed that action to combat drugs required joint cooperation between drug-producing and drug-consuming countries, based on the principle of shared responsibility. In that regard, Venezuela wished to highlight the particular problem of transit States and the need to strengthen cooperation, particularly in the Caribbean region. UNODC had played an important role with respect to Venezuela,

which had benefited from technical assistance and specialized training of its law enforcement officials.

16. He stressed the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach to combating drugs, in accordance with the objectives and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular the full respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Joint action against drugs must involve a two-pronged approach from the demand and supply perspectives. States must be committed to reducing demand, taking responsibility for drug addicts; from the supply standpoint, combating drug distribution should not jeopardize the survival of populations, particularly indigenous peoples, and their age-old traditions. It was time to acknowledge the long-standing errors that had been committed in combating drugs, and it was time to recognize the environmental damage caused by certain reduction policies, and their effects on the very existence and livelihood of vulnerable sectors of the population.

17. **Ms. Kafanabo** (Tanzania) said that the Government of Tanzania was profoundly concerned about the global drug problem and its negative impact on the country's development and poverty eradication efforts. The strategic position of Tanzania, bordering eight countries, six of which were landlocked, its good network of roads to neighbouring countries and its long stretch of coastline increased Tanzania's vulnerability to illicit drug trafficking. To a large extent Tanzania was a transit State. However, with increased enforcement in developed countries and in the countries of final destination, recent drug seizure statistics showed a sharp increase in the availability of illicit drugs in Tanzania, a trend that should be curbed before it escalated.

18. Cannabis was the most abused and trafficked drug in Tanzania, and its cultivation was on the rise. Cannabis production was more lucrative for poor farmers than traditional cash crops, which had fallen in value on the world market. The Government had launched a major campaign to sensitize local leaders and to carry out massive eradication operations and surveillance. However, such efforts alone could not guarantee a sustainable solution, and there was need to boost those efforts by seeking viable development programme alternatives, including crop substitution, in areas where cannabis was cultivated on a commercial scale. At the same time, the World Trade Organization Agreement on Agriculture should be expedited in order to ensure better terms for farmers.

19. Another area of concern to the Government was the vulnerability of young people to drug abuse and HIV infection. Advocacy programmes, including peer education, targeted youth in the hope of preventing them from becoming drug traffickers or users.

20. Successful measures had been adopted by the Government: drug control legislation had been strengthened, and special control units within law enforcement agencies had been set up and their officials trained. In addition, an inter-agency task force and awareness campaigns on the dangers posed by illicit drugs had been put into effect. The Government had also established a national plan of action and an inter-ministerial team to ensure the coherence of drug control programmes undertaken by the various stakeholders. However, the lack of resources to implement strategies and the inadequate capacity of law enforcement agencies to deal with the diversion of pharmaceutical products to illicit channels were major impediments. There was also inadequate capacity to counter the manufacture of illicit drugs, treat drug users, or effectively to address general drug abuse issues and HIV prevention. In that connection, she underscored the importance of securing international support to enable the Government to address the challenges ahead.

21. The Government of Tanzania acknowledged and endorsed the work of UNODC and called on the international community to continue its support to that body, especially through increased funding. Tanzania had vastly benefited from technical and financial support, but because of its vulnerability and the surge in illicit drug activity there was need for further support. Her delegation agreed with the suggestion made by the Executive Director of UNODC to the effect that drug control, crime deterrence and the prevention of terrorism could not be pursued in isolation. International judicial cooperation and coordination were crucial to ensuring peace, security, development and the rule of law.

22. **Ms. Eilon Shahar** (Israel) said that her delegation had acceded to a number of conventions and treaties regarding narcotic drugs and was fully committed to the Action Plan against Illicit Manufacture, Trafficking and Abuse of Amphetamine-

type Stimulants and their Precursors. Israel's national strategy to eliminate illicit drugs was based on several integrated approaches, including anti-trafficking legislation, youth education, drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation and information and advocacy. Those efforts had led to some successes. Israel's drug seizures of a variety of narcotics were the highest in the region, while drug addiction was relatively low when compared with other developed nations. Israel continued to combat the demand for ecstasy, LSD and heroine. The global increase in the use of cannabis also remained a cause for concern. With regard to enforcement, researchers in Israel were working to develop a method of detecting cannabis fields using remote aerial sensing. The relatively high rate of drug and alcohol abuse among Israel's migrant communities was a challenge for her Government. Israel had adapted its therapeutic and counselling programmes to the particular needs of migrants affected by drug and alcohol abuse. Other measures such as drug addiction hotlines in a number of languages catered to the needs of migrant populations.

23. Israel had enacted a law criminalizing trafficking in persons for the purpose of prostitution. In 2006, the legislation had been expanded to include slavery and forced labour. Under that legislation her Government was empowered to confiscate the assets of traffickers to fund a victim compensation programme. Israel also continued to work with other Governments to coordinate and implement anti-trafficking policies.

24. Drug trafficking also posed major strategic threats beyond the domestic sphere. Terrorist organizations, some with enormous global reach, used drug trafficking networks to finance their campaigns and move weapons. Israel faced the clear threat of drugs, terrorism and the link between the two along its northern border, where it had arrested and convicted citizens from Lebanon involved in drug trafficking and providing strategic information to terrorists in exchange for drugs. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy must be carried out in a comprehensive manner. Tackling drugs and international crime required strengthening regional coordination and information sharing and overcoming political differences, which must not be allowed to undermine efforts to promote common interests and security.

25. **Mr. Muchemi** (Kenya) said that his delegation welcomed the continued strengthening of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity. It commended the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for its pivotal role in enhancing the capacity of States to respond more effectively to the challenges posed by transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism, and endorsed the recommendations set forth in the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity (A/62/126).

26. Kenya continued to benefit from the various technical assistance programmes undertaken by UNODC. Its seminars and training programmes in the criminal justice and law enforcement sectors had strengthened Kenya's national capacity to combat transnational crime. Its in-depth assessment of Kenya's institutional and legislative framework would enhance Kenya's capacity to combat money-laundering. Regrettably, participation in the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols was still far from universal. Of grave concern was the low level of participation in the Firearms Protocol. His delegation urged States which had not yet done so to consider ratifying and acceding to those instruments. His Government was working closely with international partners and UNODC towards incorporating the Convention and protocols into its domestic legislation.

27. Kenya was committed to international efforts to combat trafficking in narcotic drugs. Despite its limited capacity, his Government had recently strengthened measures to counter drug trafficking, such as increased border controls and stringent penalties for drug trafficking. Such measures had yielded positive results. His Government had also participated actively in the Eastern and Southern African Anti-money-laundering Group and had enacted laws and established a national task force to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

28. Preventing and combating corruption was another formidable challenge for Kenya. The United Nations Convention against Corruption offered an unprecedented legal framework for fighting corruption. While his delegation was gratified that ratifications of and accessions to the Convention continued to increase steadily, it wished to see participation by all regions of the world. The Government continued to face

challenges, relating to the question of jurisdiction, in its efforts to recover assets acquired through corruption. Kenya was implementing a national anti-corruption strategy and had upgraded its legal framework, reinforced weak institutions and established new ones which would provide leadership in combating corruption. It had enacted legislation which defined corruption and established comprehensive rules on transparency and accountability. His delegation commended UNODC on its continued support for regional initiatives to combat transnational organized crime and called on the international community to support its Programme of Action for Africa 2006-2010.

29. **Ms. Cowan** (Canada) said that the first Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption had marked a success. Canada's recent ratification of the Convention reflected her Government's commitment to deliver greater accountability in government and to combat corruption. Her Government would also be sponsoring a series of initiatives with UNODC to further its implementation, including workshops in Latin America, the Caribbean and Central Asia. Canada had recently announced a new national anti-drug strategy with a particular emphasis on young persons. The strategy included the following priority areas: preventing illicit drug use; treating illicit drug dependency; cracking down on organized crime; and combating illicit drug production and distribution. It sought to reduce the supply and demand for illicit drugs and promote safer and healthier communities.

30. Canada took the crime of human trafficking seriously. It was guided by its domestic and international commitments, including the Trafficking Protocol. It continued to strengthen its efforts on prevention of trafficking, protection of victims, prosecution of traffickers and building partnerships, both domestically and internationally. It supported the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and would participate actively in the forum in Vienna in February 2008.

31. The Government supported international discussion of rule of law themes, including the need to promote strengthened criminal justice systems, and the continued work of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. It also supported the recent priorities for technical assistance adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime.

32. Canada welcomed the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Its national counter-terrorism capacity-building programme had supported the work of UNODC in the area of counterfeiting in Asia and the efforts of the Terrorism Prevention Branch to strengthen the legal regime against terrorism in the Americas. The programme took a balanced approach by assisting States in developing responses which took into account national security interests while remaining faithful to human rights principles and fundamental freedoms.

33. The Government was concerned by the crime and drug situation in Afghanistan and in the Americas. With respect to Afghanistan, it had announced a contribution to UNODC aimed at building the capacity of counter-narcotics law enforcement, strengthening the judicial system and helping Afghanistan work with its neighbours to combat cross-border narcotics trafficking. Many of the security challenges in the Americas stemmed from the illicit drug trade and corresponding organized crime. Canada participated in a series of regional and other forums, where it shared best practices, sponsored technical assistance and supported the regional implementation of international crime and drug instruments.

34. Canada welcomed the UNODC Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2011 and remained committed to cooperating with UNODC and other key international, regional and bilateral partners.

35. **Mr. Ramadan** (Lebanon) said that Lebanon followed a zero-tolerance policy with regard to drugs. In 1998 it had enacted a revised drug control law which included provisions on money-laundering and had implemented a national strategy aimed at reducing the supply of and demand for drugs and ensuring the treatment of drug users. Concerning supply, Lebanon implemented long-term programmes to eliminate illicit drug crops. Since 2002, Lebanon had destroyed millions of square metres of illicit crops, including cocaine crops, opium poppies, cannabis plants and all hashish crops. The authorities had also seized significant quantities of drugs, reduced drug trafficking and cooperated with Interpol. To reduce demand, the Government implemented awareness-raising programmes, organized courses, conferences and

workshops and disseminated relevant information through the media and civil society.

36. With regard to treatment, recently enacted legislation viewed drug addicts as patients rather than criminals and offered them the option of entering a hospital or treatment centre. The Drug Control Office in the Lebanese Ministry of the Interior participated regularly in the meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the Arab Office for Narcotic Affairs in the Arab Interior Ministers' Council, cooperated closely with the regional office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Cairo and submitted reports to UNODC and to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). However, the Government had been unable to fully implement its plans against drug trafficking because of insufficient assistance from the international community.

37. In view of the link between money-laundering and transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, a law criminalizing money-laundering had been enacted in 2001. Moreover, in partnership with UNODC, Lebanon carried out Project Lebanon in support of the national anti-corruption strategy, funded by the United States. Project Lebanon focused on youth and involved the design of an ethics-based model to be tested in Lebanese schools. Furthermore, as a victim of terrorism in various forms ranging from foreign occupation by Israel to terrorist attacks and assassinations of leaders and journalists, Lebanon was committed to combat terrorism in all its manifestations and was a staunch ally in international efforts in that area, having ratified 11 of the 13 international conventions on terrorism and the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and cooperating fully with the 1267, 1373, and 1540 Committees.

38. **Mr. Alemu** (Ethiopia) said that crime prevention, criminal justice and drug control, all of them crucial to world peace and security in view of globalization, were increasingly intertwined and international cooperation was imperative. Organized transboundary crime, corruption, terrorism and illegal trafficking in people and weapons were expanding at an alarming rate, particularly in the developing world and especially in the least developed countries, which lacked sufficient financial and technological resources and know-how to protect themselves. It was therefore encouraging that UNODC and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had convened a series of conferences on those issues and that practical preventive measures were being taken to implement the relevant decisions and resolutions. In that regard, the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action on Crime and Justice, entitled "Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century", and the outcome of the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice were particularly noteworthy.

39. His Government implemented those decisions and sought peace and security at home in order to ensure an environment conducive to the people's active participation in the development process. Efforts to improve the judicial system included capacity-building, establishment of a justice system reform centre and a drug administration and control agency, training for judges and public prosecutors and new legislation. New provisions on trafficking in persons, money-laundering and corruption had been incorporated into the revised penal code. The provisions on corruption reflected the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which Ethiopia had signed. Moreover, his country had concluded bilateral agreements with Kenya, Djibouti and the Sudan for combating transboundary crime. Ethiopia met its financial obligations to Interpol and played a pivotal role within the East African Police Chiefs' Organization (EAPCO). The fulfilment of international obligations related to crime prevention, criminal justice and action to combat corruption and terrorism was onerous and called for increased global solidarity and cooperation. Ethiopia's partners should stand firm by their commitments to providing necessary financial and technical support.

40. **Mr. Dall'Oglio** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that his organization, in cooperation with other major intergovernmental bodies, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), had promoted the Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking (UN.GIFT), which constituted a turning point in action to combat human trafficking. IOM currently carried out counter-trafficking operations in 84 countries. Those activities focused on (i) research and data collection, (ii) prevention through information dissemination and awareness-raising, (iii) institutional capacity-building in the public and civil-society sectors, (iv) direct assistance to trafficked persons, including shelter, safe

return and reintegration, and (v) support in the area of anti-trafficking legislation and policy.

41. Although demand for trafficked persons was a root cause of trafficking, preventive action to curb that demand was lacking. In fact, anti-trafficking resources, largely supplied by destination countries and spent in countries of origin, were used to curtail the supply of unregulated cheap labour and services in sectors particularly prone to exploitation. That approach should be coupled with increased focus on inhibiting demand for cheap labour and services in destination countries, including those in Western Europe. Counter-trafficking work had focused on women and children subjected to sexual exploitation, yet an increasing number of reported cases included men and boys. For the coming years, IOM expected a continuous increase in trafficking aimed at forced or exploited labour in the sectors of agriculture, food processing, textiles, domestic services, hotels and related activities, construction and mining.

42. IOM was ready to support policies designed to reduce demand for trafficked workers in destination countries. Such measures included applying existing labour laws to informal and unregulated employment; encouraging the creation of ethical employer associations; and developing guidelines and public awareness campaigns to assist consumers in identifying goods and services involving acceptable forms of labour. There was a clear need for opening more legal channels of migration to prevent trafficking through further subregional and bilateral initiatives enhancing labour migration cooperation and mechanisms for mainstreaming gender issues. Such approaches should be coupled with effective systems for inspecting recruitment in the source countries and with the provision of protection to migrants in the destination countries.

43. **Mr. Schulz** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that the Federation had first-hand experience of the humanitarian consequences of the misuse and abuse of drugs. He urged the bodies concerned to be guided by science, not by ignorance and fear, and to treat drug users in a humane way, respecting them as people with rights and needs. The 2008-2009 events marking the tenth anniversary of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly should respect the priority given in recent years to HIV-affected people and communities. In many countries, notably in Central Asia, HIV was directly related to drug use and abuse, while stigma and discrimination contributed to the marginalization of affected groups. Accordingly, IFRC hailed the attention paid by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to the drug problem in countries affected by poverty and insecurity and appealed for the inclusion of drug issues in strategies designed to achieve sustainable economic development.

44. Substance abuse issues were directly, indirectly or potentially related to the four main challenges confronting the global community, namely, environmental hazards, including climate change; migration; violence, particularly in urban settings; and emergent and recurring diseases and public health challenges. Improved statistics, although difficult to compile, helped to show the extent of the drug problem. For instance, Kazakhstan's official statistics showed approximately 45,000 registered intravenous drugs users (IDUs), while a study conducted in the period 1998-2000 indicated that the actual number of IDUs could be over 250,000. Persons in their twenties were the most affected age group. The infected population was largely male, but there was evidence of an increase in the number of women at risk or infected.

45. Experience in Kazakhstan and in other countries had shown that anti-drug programmes should involve communities and be managed by them or with their support. Thousands of volunteers mobilized in Kazakhstan by the Red Crescent Society stressed that, without a massive increase in funding and in the absence of comprehensive harm reduction approaches, the rate of HIV infection due to injecting drugs would continue to rise. Preliminary findings of a survey carried out by the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies regarding substance abuse would be presented at a workshop to be hosted in November 2007 by IFRC and the Italian Red Cross and were expected significantly to contribute to the work of communities, national Governments, UNODC and other bodies.

46. **Mr. Gebre-Egziabher** (United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)) said that a better understanding of the dynamics of rapid urbanization was crucial to dealing with urban crime. The proportion of the world's population living in cities, 50 per cent in 2007, was expected to reach two-thirds by 2030, with 95 per cent of that growth occurring in developing countries. Urban growth was becoming synonymous with slum growth. In most

countries experiencing rapid urbanization, much remained to be done to strengthen policing and criminal justice systems. It was urgent to take action at the local level to support the rights of the urban poor and to adopt a concerted approach to housing and services, including ensuring security of tenure and the reintegration of blighted neighbourhoods into the urban fabric. That entailed more participatory urban planning and management. In that connection, the role of local government was essential and the building of adequate capacities was crucial to city-specific crime prevention strategies.

47. Those strategies should be assessed by the degree of protection afforded to the most vulnerable segments of society. Surveys showed that not even 25 per cent of criminal incidents occurring in slums were reported. An effective public policy required overcoming that knowledge gap. To that end, UN-HABITAT had formed a Consultative Group of Partners and worked closely with UNODC and other agencies in order to develop appropriate synergies. Moreover, in its Global Report on Human Settlements 2007, entitled "Enhancing Urban Safety and Security", UN-HABITAT had made a strong case for urban crime prevention initiatives to be incorporated in urban development planning and poverty reduction initiatives, and for national Governments to support the crime prevention efforts deployed by municipalities and communities. In connection with the World Habitat Day, UN-HABITAT, in cooperation with the Government of Mexico, had organized in October 2007 an international conference on the current state of urban safety. The final recommendations of that conference provided a set of clear and agreed indications for work in that area. Such outcomes would ultimately serve as a basis for discussion at a high-level intergovernmental forum on urban crime prevention. That event, jointly organized by UN-HABITAT, UNODC and other multilateral partners, would take place during the fourth session of the World Urban Forum to be held in Nanjing, China, in October 2008.

48. **Mr. Ramadan** (Lebanon), speaking in exercise of the right of reply with reference to the statement made by Israel, said that Israeli delegates had attempted to politicize the problem of drugs when all other members were trying to find constructive solutions to it. Although his delegation had not intended to reply to the statement by the Israeli delegation, it felt compelled to do so to clarify its baseless allegations. Contrary to the statement by Israel, the region's failure to cooperate in combating organized crime stemmed not from political differences but rather the ongoing occupation. When that occupation ceased, his delegation would be willing to cooperate on all issues.

49. According to a 2003 United States State Department report, Israel was at the centre of international trafficking in ecstasy. According to United States Drug Enforcement Administration agents, Israelis had been involved in almost all of the major arrests for trafficking in ecstasy. One example involved a notorious mob called the Arizona Ring which, according to the *New York Times*, had purchased ecstasy pills from a drug supplier based in Brooklyn who had ties to the Israeli mob. Israelis were veterans, a New York narcotics agent reportedly said. Some had served in elite and intelligence units and knew all the tricks of surveillance and counter-surveillance. They were very hard to catch.

50. Although Israel had long been known for its wholesome oranges and leather sandals, its current main trade included the virtual monopoly on the global trafficking in ecstasy. Ecstasy, along with marijuana, hashish, heroin and cocaine, was currently heavily used and traded in Israel. Contemporary Israel was an affluent, drug-consuming country with an estimated 300,000 casual drug users and some 20,000 junkies. There were no reliable statistics on ecstasy use in Israel. In 2000 alone, however, police had confiscated 270,000 ecstasy tablets from smugglers, students and party-goers.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.